United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

25th PLENARY MEETING

Monday, 11 October 1993 at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 127 *(continued)*

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/48/414/Add.6)

The President: I wish to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/48/414/Add.6. In a letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communications dated 21, 24, 27 and 29 September and 4 and 6 October 1993, Chad has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MPINGA KASENDA (Zaire) *(interpretation from French)*: Mr. President, the speakers who have preceded me at this prestigious rostrum have all unanimously acknowledged your outstanding intellectual qualities, your wealth of experience and your intensive knowledge of international issues which will guarantee a positive outcome to our work that promises to be very exciting at this time when we see emerging on the horizon the irreversible turning of the activities of the Organization towards real, mutually beneficial, cooperation.

The delegation of the Republic of Zaire, which it is my honour to head, associates itself with the congratulations and wishes expressed by other delegations here present and expresses the hope that your presidency will see the essential basis laid down for the establishment of this new era of peace, prosperity, mutual understanding and tolerance that we all so wish to see.

I should also like to extend my sincere congratulations to the other members of the Bureau who, I am sure, will effectively assist you in carrying out your onerous but inspiring tasks as President.

To your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, I should like to pay a particular and well-deserved tribute for the competence, skill and know-how with which he so capably guided the work of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

I should like to express to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the Organization, the sincere expression of our appreciation and our encouragement of his determination in the search for peaceful solutions to the many armed conflicts that are devastating the world.

I should also like to welcome to the Organization the new Member States. They can count on the cooperation and assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, of the Republic of Zaire.

Barely three years ago the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of this marvelous planet Earth were filled

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with the hope of seeing close and multifaceted cooperation for development among nations.

Although the cold war was blown away by the force of the wind of perestroika we are obliged to note that this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly has opened at a time when we are witnessing the resumption of armed conflicts in at least three of the five continents which make up this world.

The collapse of the socialist bloc brought with it only a moment of calm for we note at present the explosion of hotbeds of tension and fratricidal wars in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the former Yugoslavia, and we condemn the monstrous, inhuman and horrendous acts of modern civilization there.

The primary cause of all these wars is religious or ethnic intolerance and the non-acceptance of political opinions contrary to those which one believes to be of immutable and subject to imposition on all. Thus, in Asia anachronistic situations persist and entire populations are condemned to wander without any hope of a better tomorrow.

Nevertheless, my delegation backs the negotiations that are now taking place between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on the question of Palestine and urges all the protagonists in this drama to do all in their power to ensure that these consultations lead to the conclusion of a peace agreement guaranteeing the right of each people to exist in internationally recognized territory.

We hail the courage and determination of their excellencies the Prime Minister of Israel and the President of the PLO who have recognized autonomy for Gaza and Jericho and have also committed themselves to put an end to acts of piracy and sabotage. May their example be followed by other States involved in this conflict so that a lasting peace can finally be established in this region and that we can see genuine cooperation for development.

So too, we reaffirm our full support and our backing for the efforts made by the two Koreas towards their peaceful reunification.

We should also like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate the United Nations authorities which have effectively contributed to the organization of free and democratic elections in Cambodia.

As regards Africa, this continent too has not been spared by the situation of semi-war, semi-peace in which young States must manage bloody conflicts which sorely try their fragile State structures and their precarious socio-economic infrastructures. However, the Republic of Zaire is gratified to see the international community mobilizing to prevent new conflicts and to find peaceful solutions to those fratricidal wars which are devastating a good number of African States.

The plethora of hotbeds of tension and the recourse to military action, whether for intervention or for pacification, are likely to wipe out these efforts and to damage the humanitarian action and the noble objectives of peace and harmony pursued by the United Nations.

Concerning southern Africa, in particular, Zaire supports the action being taken by the United Nations in Mozambique, and urges all the parties to the conflict to respect the commitments they have undertaken and to work towards the establishment of lasting peace there.

The positive results that we have seen in South Africa, where the white minority has agreed to involve the black majority in the administration of public affairs in a Transitional Executive Council, are grounds for satisfaction for all those who have contributed towards them, and for legitimate pride for Presidents Mandela and De Klerk.

Given these prospects for peace that we can see just over the horizon, it is our keen hope that there will be genuine reconciliation within the black community in South Africa so that a fratricidal war does not break out that would quite likely support the notions of those who wish to hold back the advent of a democratic and multi-racial Republic of South Africa.

I beg the Assembly's indulgence, since I should like now to dwell on the case of our neighbour Angola, which shares with Zaire a frontier over 2,600 kilometres long; in Angola, the civil war, which is becoming more intense, is causing considerable loss of life and incalculable material damage and is threatening the territorial integrity of that young nation.

The Republic of Zaire, which, since it acceded to independence, has had to suffer the throes of civil war, rebellion and many attempts at secession, cannot afford to support a civil war in Angola. The tragic situation being experienced by that fraternal nation is of extreme concern to us, because it is causing us enormous political, economic and social problems. Zaire is actually a semi-landlocked country, and the closure of the Benguela railway and the continuing insecurity right alongside Matadi port, our only outlet to the sea - as a result of the

crossfire between the Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) and UNITA - are doing my country considerable economic damage right at a moment when it is no longer receiving bilateral or multilateral assistance.

In addition to these many economic difficulties, there has been a massive influx of our Angolan brothers and sisters, who are finding refuge with Zairian families, to which they are linked by historical ties of blood. Providing food, shelter and so on for the refugees is increasing the difficulties being experienced by the host families, who are themselves rather disadvantaged.

The international community knows that the Republic of Zaire right now is going through a period of political turbulence and is encountering enormous economic and financial difficulties. In these conditions, where could Zaire find the additional resources to finance a civil war in Angola? Taking into account its internal problems, my country has no interest in promoting the traffic in weapons of war through Matadi port, given that they could change hands and fuel a civil war on its own territory.

Moreover, Zaire, which neither makes nor sells arms, deplores the attitude of those countries whose citizens manufacture arms and sell them to the belligerents - under the tolerant gaze of their Governments - and then come and shed crocodile tears in international forums over the fate of the victims of this fratricidal war.

The Republic of Zaire, which assisted the Republic of Angola in its struggle for independence and, through Zaire's mediation, facilitated the historic meeting between President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi at Gbadolite, is still ready to seek, with them, ways and means of putting an end to the Angolan tragedy. This is the spirit in which Zaire welcomed Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, on his visit to Kinshasa last September, and in which the President of the Republic of Zaire, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, dispatched to his Angolan counterpart an emissary whose task was to dispel any ambiguity as to whether there was meddling of any kind by my country in Angola's internal affairs.

Lastly, the Republic of Zaire, which has played an active part at the recent Libreville conference on security problems in central Africa and will soon sign the non-aggression pact that was drawn up there, considers itself an important link in the peace and security of the subregion, and does not intend to take any action that might sour the relations of good neighbourliness and cooperation that exist between our States. Ancient African wisdom tells us that when your neighbour's house is on fire, you must help him put it out in order to stop the wind wafting the flames towards your own house.

After the political turbulence that Africa experienced during the first few years of independence, some political thinkers and players believed, in good faith, that establishing strong government based on omnipresent and omnipotent single parties could forge national unity and ensure our States' harmonious development. The Republic of Zaire was no exception to this outline. In fact, for over two decades now a monolithic political system has been in operation, with its ups and downs, and has ended up, as a result of its own internal contradictions, in such deadlock that on 24 April 1990 the President of the Republic, after three months of consultations of the people, decreed the dissolution of the single party and proposed the introduction of a pluralistic political system.

Unfortunately, the enthusiasm that followed gave birth to a sort of collective outpouring and the frenzied establishment of political parties, of which there are now 360 for a total population of 40 million or so. In our concern to make an objective reassessment of our history, map out our future and ensure national reconciliation, we held a Sovereign National Conference, which, lasting over 16 months, was the costliest and the longest in Africa.

The Conference raised great hopes but was unable to achieve all its goals because, from the outset, those behind it had come to it for two different reasons. For some, the Conference was the best place to take power along revolutionary-type lines - dissolving all the existing institutions and sidelining those in charge of them - while for others, who championed a reformist type of plan, the Conference ought rather to be the place for organizing government through a progressive restructuring of the institutions. This basic difference caused heightened passions from the beginning to the end of the Conference, and the political players ended up more divided than they had been before.

As the document setting out constitutional provisions for the transitional period was not taken to its logical conclusion - it failed to abrogate expressly the Constitution in force - the country found itself with two basic constitutional texts. In conditions such as these, it has been difficult to arrange an equitable sharing of power between the various transitional institutions, which is why we have an institutional crisis and a political impasse.

To extricate ourselves from this situation, and on the initiative of the President of the Republic and the President

of the Supreme Council of the Republic, the delegates of several political platforms met in caucus to create a new institutional framework. But the results of the caucus were again disputed and the entire political class felt the need to resume negotiations. These achieved, *inter alia*, the establishment of a new institutional framework, the unanimous acceptance of a timetable establishing the various dates for elections in the next 15 months and the adoption by referendum, within the same period, of a new constitution.

Thus, a referendum will be held in 1994 on the adoption of the new constitution. There will also be free, transparent and democratic elections for mandates for the presidency of the Republic, the Parliament and the regional and local councils. The presence of an independent national electoral commission and international observers is planned to reassure all sides of the proper carrying out of all electoral operations. Thus, Zaire repeats its request to the United Nations bodies and countries with a long history of democracy for substantial help in the implementation of these important timetables.

I should like here, on behalf of the Government of my country, to thank Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of our universal Organization, who, at the request of the President of the Republic, sent one of his closest assistants, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, to Kinshasa to try to gather the political class of Zaire around the negotiating table. We extend to him here the deep gratitude of the people of Zaire for his selflessness and readiness in his attempt to reconcile the sons and daughters of my country.

In an atmosphere of political crisis and social tension, the protection of human rights becomes very difficult and is subject to suspicions. The reestablishment of State authority and respect for the laws of the land are often identified, at best, with constraints and, at worst, with arbitrary actions, while a country cannot become involved in development projects without order or collective discipline.

Despite the flaws noted in the implementation of human rights, Zaire has nevertheless made commendable efforts along those lines by granting full freedom to the press and authorizing the free exercise of political activities and the free expression of opinions. It intends to follow up these moves by cooperating with the specialized agencies of the United Nations in making more effective those bodies in Zaire entrusted with ensuring the strict observance of human rights.

The democratization process is irreversible in Zaire and no one is contemplating re-establishing the old order. We all aspire to change and to the establishment of a State of law. What is important at the present stage of my country's development is to know how to implement that change peacefully. For now, we are asking the international community and in particular those countries which wrongly believe that they have received a mandate to administer Zaire to let the Zairians themselves settle their own problems, for whenever they are free of foreign interference they always manage to overcome their antagonisms. We therefore urge our usual partners to help us to overcome this crisis instead of dividing us by canonizing some and rendering others anathema.

The opportunity has thus been offered to certain countries that call themselves champions of democracy to support the organization of free and transparent elections in Zaire rather than to propose undemocratic plans that bring people to power who do not have the vote of the population, which alone can confer legitimacy. That, in our view, is the only way to rein in the excessive ambitions of certain political leaders who, in their obtrusive declarations in Kinshasa and the Western capitals, are harming the proper unfolding of the democratization process.

The international community is certainly unaware of the dishonourable treatment experienced by Zairians in their travel to other countries. At present, it is nearly impossible for a citizen of Zaire to travel to, or opt to reside in, certain countries of the northern hemisphere, since for his visa is automatically refused unless he reviles his country and the legally established authorities. Is it the full enjoyment of fundamental human freedoms when he cannot reside in a territory other than his own unless he requests the status of political refugee? Are the citizens of Zaire treated this way being punished for their opinions? How can those countries that practise this policy of exclusion have a precise idea of what is transpiring in Zaire when they are preventing one category of my fellow citizens from freely expressing themselves and championing political ideas that run contrary to their own?

The political uncertainties that have overshadowed Zaire for three years have pushed into the background the economic and social problems of a country in which strikes, city-wide shutdowns, civil disobedience and looting have torn asunder the economic fabric and aggravated the people's poverty. Zaire - which has seen itself arbitrarily and vexingly deprived, under the pressure of certain Western Powers, of access to financial facilities and to bilateral and multilateral assistance at a time when its

people has the greatest need - hopes that the new era in the offing will provide an opportunity for all its partners to assist it to revive its collapsed economy. In this context, my country very much hopes to resume dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions to improve the management of public finances and to promote the flourishing of free enterprise.

As everyone knows, Zaire is a subcontinent made up of a mosaic of tribes and ethnic groups which periodically, as happens throughout the world, have trouble living together. As we approach major political or electoral stages, tensions exacerbated by demagogues is transformed into open conflicts that compel, often in inhuman conditions, some of our compatriots to abandon their homes.

The Government of the Republic of Zaire cannot tolerate a situation in which citizens of Zaire find themselves refugees in their own land. Thus, more specifically concerning Shaba, it is not correct to speak of "ethnic cleansing", since the Shaba, like the two Kasai, are not ethnic groups but the provincial homes of several ethnic groups. The Government has taken measures to halt all forced displacements, ensure the security of those who wish to remain in Shaba, and organize transportation of those who have opted to leave in humanly acceptable conditions. This task, like that of the restoration of displaced persons to their original homes, requires enormous material and financial means.

In cooperation with the specialized bodies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, the Government is working to gather all available means in order to come to the aid of the victims of this tragedy.

Here we should like to welcome the action carried out, at the request of the President of the Republic, by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who sent a specialized inter-agency team led by Mr. Darko Silovic to study in the field the ways and means to bring humanitarian assistance to these disadvantaged peoples. We fervently hope that the international community will respond massively and positively to the Secretary-General's appeal, and we are grateful in advance for this.

Concerning the ethnic difficulties in North Kivu, it is important to know that this is an ancient problem born of colonization, which was then perpetuated by the transplantation of Rwandese peoples to Zaire and by the influx of refugees following the ethnic conflicts that neighbouring country has experienced. Without lingering over the underlying causes of this conflict, we should like to inform international opinion that the Government has taken measures to re-establish calm in the region and to ensure the security of all parties to the conflict.

An appeal to humanitarian assistance for those peoples who have lost everything in these sad events is sent out to the international community, the non-governmental organizations and Zaire's customary partners, in light of the urgency of the situation and the paucity of our means which do not allow us to cope with it alone.

Before concluding my statement, I should like to take up a problem which is of the greatest concern to the international community and to my country in particular: environmental protection. Zaire, whose considerable expanse of tropical humid forest gives it the symbolic status of the planet's second lung would appreciate the international community's acknowledgement of the huge sacrifices it is making, which are depriving it of incalculable financial resources.

The preservation of the ozone layer requires that additional resources be found for the implementation of Agenda 21 and the conventions dealing with biodiversity. Thus, my country believes that its commitment not to cut down various species of trees which it considers the common heritage of mankind should allow it to benefit from certain types of compensation which would fill this financial vacuum or at least this lack of earning power.

Finally, the delegation of the Republic of Zaire joins in the request made by numerous delegations for a restructuring of the United Nations system to allow all Member States, regardless of size, fully to play their role in building a world of justice, peace and mutually advantageous cooperation.

Mr. TURNQUEST (Bahamas): Twenty years ago the Bahamas took its seat as the 138th Member in this Assembly of the United Nations, and we proudly assumed the solemn obligations and responsibilities conferred by the Charter. This session marks our twentieth anniversary, which we celebrate with our friends of the now reunited Germany with whom we were admitted.

As we reflect on the global events of those two decades, we see a world significantly transformed. Where there was a single Soviet Union and a single Yugoslav Republic, we now have the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States. In addition, the admission of many new States to this great Organization has resulted in an almost complete universality of membership. It is therefore with much joy that we warmly welcome all new

Members and extend to each the fraternal hand of friendship and partnership in the continued struggle for human dignity and development.

The Bahamas has also witnessed significant national development since its membership. Today we are one of the most stable and democratic societies. We are proud of this achievement, and we encourage all those who would to follow our example of freedom, justice and peace, buttressed by sound principles of human and national development.

We have yet another reason for celebration. Your unanimous election to the presidency of this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, Sir, is an historic occasion not only for you personally and for your great country but also for every Caribbean Government and person. Bahamians, together with all Caribbean peoples, therefore pay high tribute to you and to your country. We are fully conscious of your impeccable and enviable credentials as a diplomat, and we are satisfied that those same skills will serve to guide us through this session, despite its challenges, to successful and lasting results.

Permit me also to pay high tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, for his outstanding contributions to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. His presidency witnessed significant achievements and today we are the beneficiaries of his visionary leadership.

While we who are privileged to represent our Governments have the luxury of pronouncing international policies, the Secretary-General enjoys no such luxury. His is the responsibility of going beyond the rhetoric to the substance of the many resolutions and decisions which we adopt in this Assembly each year. His task is therefore dauntingly complex. Nevertheless, he has borne his enormous responsibilities with great dignity and high distinction.

In this connection, we cannot help but recall the biblical injunction: "Out of Egypt have I called my Son". (*The Holy Bible, Matthew 2:15*) Like his predecessor, he has performed beyond our expectations, and is deserving of our praise for his proficiency in assisting this Organization in shaping contemporary history so dramatically.

At this juncture I wish to take this opportunity to extend the deepest sympathy of the Government and the people of the Bahamas to the people and the Government of India, who suffered such tragic loss of life and property during the recent devastating earthquake, and to reaffirm our solidarity with them during this time of national disaster.

It would be very easy for me on behalf of my Government and country to rehearse the developments of the past year and offer the members of the Assembly some observations. However, we believe that a focus on the future is more timely.

As we near the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, it is the view of the Bahamas that that significant turning-point should be seized as an opportunity to assess where we are and what is required to move further ahead in the fulfilment of the principles of the Charter, so that the forthcoming anniversary will indeed be cause for celebration.

In reflecting on what is required to move ahead, we invite all Member States to focus with us on how each one of us, given our varied capacities, can assist the Organization in moving closer to the full achievement of the principles enshrined in the Charter.

There is no question that the United Nations, in its often unappreciated role in the promotion of such objectives as international cooperation and respect for human rights, has been vindicated in this approach by successes far beyond expectations.

In the political sphere, such successes include the fostering of a shift to democracy in Eastern Europe; the dramatic reduction, through voluntary destruction, of nuclear weapons; the Mission of the Organization of American States (OAS) and United Nations in Haiti; the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991; the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council in South Africa; the very recent signing of the historic peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as well as the Declaration of Principles between Israel and Jordan; and the repelling of aggression and the restoration of sovereignty in Kuwait. In this context, the Security Council resolution that determines the Kuwaiti boundary must be respected.

In addressing the hurdles which must be overcome before lasting solutions are achieved, we believe that more emphasis should also be placed on the expanded economic, social and military role of the United Nations. That role is demonstrated by the peace-keeping forces dispatched

globally and by the recent successful Conferences on Environment and Development and Human Rights, as well as by the forthcoming conferences on women, population and development, the Summit for Social Development and, most importantly for the Bahamas, the forthcoming Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, scheduled to be held at Barbados in 1994.

The Bahamas places particular emphasis on the role of the United Nations in the economic and social fields and fully expects that the revitalized United Nations will provide an enhanced capacity for the Organization to perform that important role. It is in this context, therefore, that we support the efforts of the Secretary-General to restructure the Organization in the economic and social fields.

As members are aware, success invariably brings greater responsibilities and challenges. Indeed, these greater responsibilities, challenges, and even attendant impediments, have regrettably already begun to sour the excitement of the many achievements attained. But we must not let this reverse side of success debilitate us. We must remain focused so that narrower vested interests do not hinder the achievement of goals set in the wider interest. We must permit no circumstance to impede the earliest cessation of the atrocities of war for a return to peaceful settlement of disputes. We must be sensitive to and respond practically, in the spirit of the Charter, to national needs, pressures and civil unrest. The call for regional action in the settlement of disputes and peace-keeping will also need to be further emphasized as we seek to maintain the integrity of the Organization.

In this connection, we particularly underscore the need for the fullest support of the implementation of the Governors Island Accord on the restoration of democracy in Haiti, not only on the basis of unrelenting moral pressure but, equally, through material and technical assistance towards fostering the economic revitalization and enduring health of that country's democratic institutions.

While the unpleasant spectacle of politics through conflict has reasserted itself at the centre of the world stage, regrettably, politics has two companions, which often influence it, though rarely gaining the same degree and magnitude of attention given to politics. These two companions are economic and social tensions. We must ever be vigilant of these two, often unruly companions. Again, we must find our focus in the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Against that background, there are several questions I feel must be put as part of the deliberations we will undertake during this session.

First, is the peace dividend releasing adequate resources and civilian expertise to impact developmental needs?

Secondly, should life after self-determination for the newer members of the international community provoke stagnant growth in those less-recently sovereign?

Thirdly, is there sufficient retraining and assistance to ensure that the trade liberalization facilitated by megablocs promotes fair, democratic and transparent institutional strengthening and the widest empowerment?

And, lastly, how do we ensure that environmental awareness, as a catalyst for a better quality of life globally, does not become yet another trade conditionality?

These questions are being posed because, if they are neglected or inadequately addressed, the new world order will be but a shifting of power centres and a spawning of new seeds of international economic, social and political instability.

In many countries, including the Bahamas, social tensions are reordering national priorities. We must return to basics in dealing with problems of a pandemic nature, such as poverty, illicit drugs, crime, violence, international terrorism, human rights violations and disease, especially the urgent necessity for dealing with the devastations caused by acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Throughout this global village our Member States are facing the disintegration of the traditional family values, coupled with rampant unemployment. We must re-emphasize those spiritual values which respect life, the dignity and worth of the human person and his or her importance to national life and development. In order that our peoples will avoid hopelessness and survive the adverse effects of economic decline, we must share more directly the burden of action for solutions with those community institutions and social partners which are the teachers and the examples of positive spiritual and moral values.

Fundamentally, the Bahamas remains morally persuaded of, and financially committed to, the goals and worth of the United Nations. To underscore this commitment, The Bahamas has recently deposited instruments of accession to international agreements in

some of the priority areas on the United Nations agenda, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and we shall shortly sign the chemical weapons Convention. In reality, the approaches and solutions found in these Conventions have long been traditional Bahamian policy and practice.

Despite a 100 per cent increase in the regular budget assessment for the Bahamas over the past five years, we remain unwavering in our acceptance of the necessary sharing of the financial burden in order that this Organization may achieve its objectives. On the other hand, the Bahamas wishes to have consideration given to the level of its assessment, and in that process we shall be submitting evidence that our reputed comparatively high per capita income not only masks the true indigenous per capita income situation, but also belies the increasing demands arising from the development needs of our widely scattered archipelago. We submit that, given these circumstances, there ought to be some mitigation available to the Bahamas, given these circumstances.

The Bahamas is very cognizant that we remain one of the few cases of comparative political tranquillity and unassailed natural beauty. Our commitment to the maintenance of national unity and the preservation of the environment is unwavering. We therefore believe that the Bahamas is ideally suited as a propitious setting for difficult negotiations, and we offer the Organization our facilities, which, we are convinced, will enhance the conduct of such affairs. We further pledge our commitment to contribute, to the extent possible, to making operational the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" and Papua New Guinea's proposed agenda for development. We see these agenda items as practical approaches to dealing with problem-solving for conflict resolution, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building, and poverty alleviation.

As we approach the fiftieth year of our Organization's existence, to ensure even better years ahead our watchwords should be "perspective" and "purpose": perspective in not losing sight of the goals of our founding fathers, who emphasized the primacy of people in the preamble to our Charter; and purpose in recognizing and accepting that the means for, and the road to, the end of international disorder and insecurity must begin with the individual. Our initially separate personal attitudes, motives and actions ultimately determine whether there will be an international climate for peace or one for disorder. The success of our Organization is therefore dependent, at one and the same time, on our international, collective and personal actions.

In our Caribbean corner of this global village, the Bahamas continues its efforts in the struggle to bring about peace and democracy in neighbouring Haiti. The success of this process will permit our own social and economic landscape to be relieved of the extra burden of caring for the thousands of illegal immigrants from that country who defy the sometimes harsh elements of nature in search of a safe haven in our relative paradise. We trust that the world - and especially the Member States of this Organization - has taken due note of the enormous weight imposed upon our small country by this undertaking. The Bahamas has well demonstrated its concern and care for its neighbours of the Republic of Haiti. I call to mind the famous statement by one of the young residents of Father Flanagan's Boys' Town United States of America . When asked about the concern and care he demonstrated for his brother he replied, "He ain't heavy, Father; he's my brother". The fact is, our brother is heavy, but we bear him gladly, in Christian charity, and in full and great expectation of imminent peace in Haiti.

Our Bahamas remains proudly and immovably in league with this great Organization.

Mrs. WERLEIGH (Haiti) *(interpretation from French)*: For the Haitian delegation, the assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly by, for the first time ever, a representative of the Caribbean is a source of pride and satisfaction. I should like to convey to you, Mr. President, the warm congratulations of the President, the Government and the people of the Republic of Haiti on your unanimous election and their best wishes for success in your endeavours. Your selection is undoubtedly a manifestation of the well-founded acknowledgement of your eminent personal qualities and rich diplomatic experience, and also attests to the growing role of your country, the Republic of Guyana, in international relations.

I wish also to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, who successfully directed the Assembly's work at its forty-seventh session.

This is also an opportunity for me to express our profound appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his remarkable efforts in the cause of peace and for the new dynamics that he has stamped on the Organization.

As the century draws to a close, history is being made at a remarkable pace. Every day there are important events that put international life on a new course because of the profound impact they have on the destiny of peoples. It seems to us that, at the dawn of the third millennium, the world is seeking new direction. Respect for the person, the need for democracy and fundamental freedoms and the climate of peace to which peoples throughout the world aspire: these concepts are taking concrete form in major events that attract our attention today. In the search for a new dimension to give to peace, leaders in various parts of the world have begun a dialogue that, in the past, was thought impossible.

This is the case in the Middle East, where, after decades of hostility, Israelis and Palestinians have embarked on the path to a historic *rapprochement*, which we hope will be of benefit to the two peoples and the entire region.

Likewise, recent developments in South Africa - notably the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council and the announcement that free elections are to be held on 27 April 1994 on the basis of universal suffrage - signal the long-awaited building of a multi-racial, democratic and united society.

Following two decades of civil war, Cambodia is at last experiencing a period of peace. This has made possible the holding of democratic general elections and the establishment of a legitimate Government.

After 12 years of armed conflict, El Salvador, with the signing of the Mexico Agreements, is moving towards the consolidation of peace.

We must note that, in all continents, considerable progress is being made in the search for peace, although the existence of hotbeds of tension of all types - fuelled by, among other factors, racial, ethnic, tribal or clan differences - indicates that dialogue, which alone can ensure harmonious human coexistence, is not always achieved spontaneously.

The United Nations has played a decisive role in the mediation aimed at securing a negotiated settlement of these crises. We support the Secretary-General's sustained efforts to contribute to the process of bringing peace to these peoples, whose pain, privation and distress resonate deeply in the hearts of the Haitian people. There is no doubt that the concepts of preventive diplomacy, maintenance of peace, restoration of peace and peace building that are developed in the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" are guiding principles for this Organization in its action to guarantee international peace and security.

But, in order to meet the diverse challenges confronting it and to respond to the expectations placed in it, the United Nations must adapt to a new reality and must have adequate means to do so. In this context, the Haitian delegation supports the process of reform and restructuring aimed at increasing the Organization's effectiveness. We believe that United Nations activities in the field of economic and social development should be given at least as much attention as that accorded to peace-keeping operations.

Unquestionably, the "Agenda for Peace" provides the Organization with a point of reference, which enables us to approach the problems of peace in a global environment that is in a state of change and compels us to reflect on the question of what constitutes the very foundations of peace. Some say that peace is indissociably related to democracy and development. We share this view. Without peace, there can be no development, and, without development and respect for human rights, one cannot expect social peace.

My Government, which was established as a result of the Governors Island Agreements, believes that the fundamental principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the Haitian Constitution should be constantly in our minds, motivating us to provide all the better for the well-being of our people.

For two years the Haitian people has been waging an earnest and constant struggle for the restoration of democracy in Haiti and of the fundamental rights that were stolen from it in the *coup d'état* of 30 September 1991. Today, thanks to the constant support of the international community, we are on the eve of turning this painful page in the history of our country. In this respect, we should like to express warm thanks to the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Organization of American States for his inestimable achievement. We hope that we shall be able to continue to cooperate with him towards securing a definitive settlement of the Haitian crisis.

As members know, the Governors Island Agreement was signed on 3 July 1993. That instrument sets the modalities for the restoration of constitutional order and democracy in Haiti.

On 30 August a Prime Minister, chosen in accordance with our Constitution, took office, and a consensus Government was established. The economic measures that had been adopted by the Security Council were suspended, and they will be lifted definitively at the end of the transitional process. Technical assistance, to strengthen the institutions and to consolidate democracy, is taking shape through the United Nations Mission in Haiti, which is already beginning to be deployed.

With a view to fostering national reconciliation, the President of the Republic has granted an amnesty in respect of political offences committed during the period of the *coup d'état*.

Other steps remain to be taken before October 30, when His Excellency Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the democratically elected President, returns to Haiti to take up again the mandate conferred upon him by the Haitian people.

None the less, recent events, characterized by an upsurge of violence, greatly discredit the political will of the other party to respect scrupulously all the terms of the Governors Island Agreement and the New York Pact. Just a few hours ago, armed groups demonstrated at Port-au-Prince to oppose the arrival of the members of the technical mission of the United Nations. The national radio station was under assault by armed individuals manifestly opposed to a peaceful settlement of the crisis. Such behaviour clearly jeopardizes the success of the Governors Island Agreement. The setting up of such institutionalized mechanisms of violence and intimidation by factions opposing the establishment of democracy and the growing number of human-rights violations worry us, because they reveal the deliberate bad faith of institutions whose function it is precisely to safeguard security and our citizens' exercise of their rights.

Aware that this situation cannot go on, we send out from this rostrum a sincere appeal to all those who wish in good will to build a better life today and a better future for the children of Haiti and to give to our country an opportunity to renew its path of progress. We also appeal to the international community to maintain its pressure so that the minority forces opposing the democratic aspirations of the Haitian people will find themselves completely isolated and so that they will have no choice other than dialogue and reconciliation.

The return of constitutional order in Haiti is part of the genuine international political plan for which we have fought, and it symbolizes at the same time an effort for a democratization process in Haiti and, at the world level, the triumph of law, supported by the moral solidarity of the international community.

The free and honest elections of 16 December 1990, which brought President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power, represent the country's first democratic experience since its independence, the first application of the Haitian Constitution of 1987 and, above all, the first step towards guaranteeing the rights of the citizen. Our experiences over the past two years have convinced us that the protection of democracy and fundamental rights is a cause that transcends our national borders and takes on an international dimension.

The return of constitutional order in Haiti will be a victory of the State and the rule of law over totalitarianism and imposture, an ongoing struggle that unites us all and makes it possible for us to confront those who jeopardize peace.

We know that in the absence of democracy and, therefore, in the absence of the institutions and structures of the rule of law, the protection of human rights would be quixotic and ineffectual, especially in my country. This democracy requires real participation, pluralistic and transparent. This democracy, in our view, cannot mean only the holding of periodic elections; it means, rather, a collective way of life in an adapted economy.

The invaluable support of the international community will make possible the return of constitutional order in my country, and we shall apply all our national resources to the construction of a State where the rule of law genuinely prevails, a State that does not content itself merely with guaranteeing public freedoms, but that also seeks to promote equality and solidarity. This is the challenge we shall try to meet, because we firmly believe that a State in which all its children cannot live because of dictatorship and barbarism is unacceptable at the dawning of the twenty-first century.

The political stakes the international community must face are compounded by economic, social and cultural challenges. Poverty, ignorance and the scourge of disease are still negative factors threatening the very cohesion of States and continuing to cause gross imbalances in the countries of the South, especially the least developed among them. An unbridled imitation of Western models has led some countries to ignore almost completely the value of their heritage of creativity and wisdom and their enterprising spirit. The result is the absence of a cultural dimension of development and a lack of participation by an

important sector of their societies: the most impoverished sector, which is unable to protest, or to protect its own interests, a sector made up especially of women, children and the masses of disenfranchised poor.

Efforts have been made at the national, regional and international levels. A certain amount of progress has been achieved. In spite of all that, the values proposed - entrepreneurship, growth, profit and so on - remain inaccessible to the great majority of people living in the countries of the South. This poses a grave threat to one of the very cornerstones of human rights: the right to development.

Day by day the world is becoming increasingly interdependent and, in a sense, increasingly integrated. We are confronting a profound transition that promises to be complex and hazardous. We must do our best so that this globalization, this world economy, will not further widen the gap between North and South. The absence of an equitable system is being felt increasingly. The South remains in a position of subordination and dependence which prevents it from managing this new world order well. Global initiatives are indeed necessary. As we approach the twenty-first century a profound reform of the international system, particularly in the fields of trade, finance and technology, has become vitally important. I do mean profound reform, a reform that will bring about a restructured dialogue between North and South; a reform that will lead to viable and sustainable economic growth for the countries of both North and South, a growth which will be measured not only by growth in gross national product but also by certain social and political achievements; the access by all without any discrimination to fundamental services such as food, health-care, housing and appropriate education; and access to a democratic form of government and effective system of justice to protect all the people.

Lasting, bold and courageous solutions must be found if we truly want to lift the barriers that prevent the economic development of the group of countries to which we belong.

The questions of debt, delays in the flow of technology, of capital, and of direct investment to the countries of the South, the constant decline in the prices of commodities, worsening access to markets and deterioration in the terms of trade are all questions that need to be discussed seriously by the international community if we are to arrive at a better balanced, new international economic order.

The Republic of Haiti, which over the past two years has experienced a situation that the Security Council described as unique and exceptional, is now at a crossroads. In order to restore the process of democracy and the rule of law in the country the population of Haiti and its legitimate Government have made enormous sacrifices. These sacrifices, together with a long history of corruption, denial of rights, and plundering, have led to disaster at the economic, social and environmental levels. Whole sectors of national production have been destructured and the environment has been dramatically affected. The social cost of a return to democracy is extremely high and has therefore in advance jeopardized all future endogenous development efforts.

That is why we ask for the unfailing support and backing of the international community, which, we feel, should in the short-, medium- and long-term involve substantial, increased and strengthened technical and financial cooperation.

The time has come to transform the vast upsurge of solidarity which we have seen in the course of the past two years, into a powerful, concerted effort at open, fruitful and substantially enhanced cooperation.

The Organization, better than anyone, is aware of the breadth of the challenges today confronting the Government of Haiti. It would be futile to hope for a strengthening of the rule of law, which remains our priority objective, if we are not able rapidly to alleviate the enormous distress facing the overwhelming majority of the Haitian people.

We want to be assured that today as in the past the Organization will continue to stand by us at this crucial stage, as a result of which socio-economic conditions should be substantially improved in a Haiti that is reconciled with itself and in which rights and freedoms flourish.

While we recognize that no price can be placed on peace we do believe that it requires dialogue and reconciliation, without which the process of transition cannot lead to lasting democracy.

The fashioning of a new world has been the shared responsibility of us all since the founding of the Organization in 1945. At the San Francisco Conference the Haitian delegation, imbued with the historic responsibility of being the first black republic in the world, had understood, above and beyond the inspiration of the day which led to the establishment of the United Nations,

that the Organization represented an opportunity not only for our island nation but also for all responsible countries that would join this community of nations.

We want to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the new Member States and we hope that the ad hoc committee which is to study the question of Taiwan will find a solution that is satisfactory to all the parties concerned, in keeping with the fundamental principles of international law.

Let us take the tremendous opportunity being given to us today to build the new world that generations of men and women are awaiting; let us take this opportunity to help each other by establishing a continuous dialogue between North and South in order to find urgent responses and solutions to the problem of underdevelopment and poverty, that ailment of our century which has shaken mankind. May dialogue become our password.

Mr. LENGSAVAD (Lao People's Democratic Republic) *(spoke in Lao; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)*: First of all, I would like on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to congratulate you, Sir, most warmly on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-eighth session. We are familiar with your great diplomatic skills and your patience and perseverance and therefore feel certain that you will guide the work of this session towards a successful conclusion.

I would also like to convey our wholehearted congratulations to the Secretary-General of our Organization, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the tireless and efficient efforts he has exerted in discharging his important responsibilities over the past year. We wish him every success in the accomplishment of his complex and difficult tasks at the head of our Organization.

The Lao delegation also extends a welcome to the States that have recently become Members of the United Nations: the Principality of Andorra, Eritrea, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Principality of Monaco, the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. Their presence among us certainly enhances the universality of the United Nations.

The present session of the General Assembly has begun at a time when the international situation as a whole is evolving in a positive direction, conducive both to dialogue and to cooperation between States. None the less, the genuine peace that peoples the world over have so long awaited has not been attained. From East to West, from North to South, sizeable and often tragic conflicts keep breaking out. It is true that some of them have been successfully resolved, but many others, of an ethnic, racial and religious nature, are arising in various parts of the world and are raging unabated, rendering the world situation fragile and precarious.

In Europe, the situation in the Republic of Bosnia remains tense and even explosive, and could threaten both regional and global peace and security. In flagrant defiance of international humanitarian law, crimes such as "ethnic cleansing", mass rapes, torture and deliberate bombing of civilian targets continue to be committed against the innocent Bosnian people. Given the gravity of the problem, all the parties to this painful conflict should show the courage and the sense of realism necessary to reach a just and equitable political settlement freely and as quickly as possible, and thereby contribute to the restoration of peace, security and normalcy in that country and in the entire region.

In South Africa, the conclusion of an agreement on the date of the first multiracial elections and the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council constitute an important stage in the efforts of the people of that country to build a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Nevertheless, the overall situation in the country remains fragile. Sadly, we still witness an upsurge of acts of violence and of discord in many parts of the country. Therefore, political, social and racial order must be restored so that the reforms thus begun can continue, at an accelerated pace.

In Somalia, the evolution of the situation is still disquieting. It is vital that the international community find just and lasting solutions to this problem in accordance with the rights and aspirations of the Somali people.

In the Middle East, an important step has been taken in the quest for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Israel-Arab conflict. The Lao delegation is pleased at the mutual recognition between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, as well as the Gaza-Jericho autonomy agreement which was signed in Washington on 13 September 1993. We hope that that agreement will help the various parties to the conflict to establish a climate of mutual trust and in this way to find a comprehensive settlement that is just and honourable for all, in the framework of Security Council resolutions 242

(1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant United Nations resolutions.

In western Asia, despite the signing last March at Islamabad of a peace agreement between the Afghan parties in conflict, Afghanistan remains the theatre of civil war. In the interests of national concord among Afghans, of the reconstruction of their homeland and of the peace and security of the entire region, we appeal to all the parties concerned to put an end to their conflicts.

On the Korean peninsula, there is still an atmosphere of mutual distrust in the military sphere. We welcome the tireless efforts made by all the countries concerned, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to ensure that the Korean peninsula is a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It would be in the highest interest of the entire north-east Asian region and of the world if peace, stability and cooperation were to be achieved.

In South-East Asia, the countries of the region generally enjoy good relations, and this is opening up a new era for the broadening of their cooperation, day by day, in many fields of shared interest. For the first time my own country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, participated as an observer in the Ministerial Meeting of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), held recently in Singapore. We are pleased at this important meeting with the countries of ASEAN which has given new impetus to our joint efforts to promote cooperation in different fields among the peoples of the region.

Our delegation is also gratified by the historic events that have taken place in Cambodia, our immediate neighbour. The promulgation of the new constitution by His Majesty King Samdech Norodom Sihanouk and the establishment of a new Government in that country will open the way to peace, stability and national harmony, thus contributing to the strengthening of cooperation and friendship in the region.

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 1992 was a year of many achievements. Our gross national product increased by 7 per cent over 1991; our rate of inflation is 10 per cent, compared to 14 per cent in 1991; and the rate of exchange in general has stabilized. In other words, the multi-ethnic Lao people is seeing a gradual improvement in its standard of living. From a political standpoint, our country has experienced solid stability, and we intend vigorously to continue our effort to promote democracy and our people's collective decision-making power, in accordance with our country's historical and cultural realities and with its level of economic and social development.

At the beginning of 1993, the National Assembly endorsed our national plan for socio-economic development through the year 2000. Under this plan, the Lao Government has set for itself two major objectives.

The first is aimed at meeting the most urgent daily needs of our population, especially of the ethnic minorities that live in the mountainous regions; bringing about a gradual rise in their standard of living, both material and cultural; and ensuring political and social stability in the country.

The second is to promote the development of agriculture and forestry in concert with the development of services and of industry, especially in the field of hydropower, one of the areas of potential growth in our country; to develop more forcefully our market economy, create internal savings, stabilize State finances and work steadily towards financial autonomy; and to strengthen our efforts at development of human resources in order to create conditions conducive to national development in the immediate future and for the years to come.

In order to realize this plan, we will endeavour to achieve an average growth rate of 8 per cent, to maintain economic and financial balance, to preserve stability of prices and of rates of exchange, and to keep the inflation rate no higher than 10 per cent per year. The Government will continue its policy of broadening cooperation with other countries and in this regard hopes to have the support and assistance in all respects of the international community.

According to the United Nations World Economic Survey, production at the international level should increase by only 1.5 per cent this year and 3 per cent in 1994, compared with .6 per cent in 1992: a very weak recovery of growth in general terms. This weak recovery, especially in the industrialized countries, entails a continued decline in the demand for export goods from the developing countries and a more abrupt decline in the prices of their raw materials, which are of vital importance to their economies. Bearing in mind the interdependence of the components of the global economy, it would be wiser for the developed countries to attach greater importance to the developing countries and to commit themselves truly to international cooperation founded upon revitalization of the economy and development in the interests of all.

The problem of the environment, because of its importance in its relation to development, is still at the forefront of global concerns. We are still witnessing the pollution of our air, seas and oceans, abrupt climate changes, a steady depletion of the ozone layer, and desertification in many parts of the world. It is time for the developed countries and the developing countries to strengthen their international cooperation effectively and to take forceful measures to protect the environment, in accordance with their respective responsibilities and capacities and with the well-known Agenda 21, adopted in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

As for the drug problem, my delegation is pleased that the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly will devote special meetings to this subject. We intend to contribute to its consideration in view of the importance of this problem and its implications in the world at large and in our own country.

The question of promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms still occupies a central place on the international agenda. Because it is so important and so sensitive, this question requires serious consideration on the basis of the principles of non-selectivity, objectivity and impartiality. To this we should add that the historic, cultural, political, social, economic and religious realities of each country need to be taken into account. From this standpoint, we are on the whole satisfied with the results obtained at the recent World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, Austria, from 14 to 25 June 1993.

With the end of bipolarization, it is important that States place their hopes in the United Nations, which is truly intended to be universal and institutional, capable of maintaining international peace and security, of promoting development and of having law and justice prevail the world over. So that it can live up to its new responsibilities, the Organization must also build its new structure. A revitalized, restructured United Nations made more democratic in its decision-making process, particularly in the Security Council, will certainly be able to play its rightful central role in the management of international affairs. States and peoples all over the world, large and small alike, powerful or weak, rich or poor, could benefit greatly from such a development.

Mr. ALLEYNE (Dominica): On behalf of the delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica, I am honoured to congratulate you, Sir, and your country, the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I am particularly pleased that this position is held this year, for the first time, by a national of a country that is a member of the Caribbean Community and I have no doubt that your intellect and wide experience as one of the Caribbean's most outstanding diplomats will ensure excellence in the performance of your duties. I assure you of the full cooperation of the delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica in the conduct of the affairs of this General Assembly.

The Commonwealth of Dominica wishes to congratulate Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Monaco and the Slovak Republic on their admission to membership of the United Nations. The international community is, in the words of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali:

> "Humanity's best hope in the pursuit of peace, development and human rights". (*A/48/1, para. 513*)

We therefore welcome these new Members as they join in the commitment to world peace, development and support for democracy and human rights.

The universality of membership is an important principle of the United Nations. We believe that, in keeping with this principle and in accordance with the established pattern of parallel representation of divided countries in the United Nations, the exceptional case of the Republic of China on Taiwan should be seriously considered by the international community at the next session of the General Assembly. The Republic of China on Taiwan, with its rich natural and human resources could, if given the opportunity, make a significant contribution to the international community. Its people are also entitled to enjoy the rights enjoyed by all populations of the Members of this world body. The Commonwealth of Dominica therefore supports the efforts of the Republic of China on Taiwan to obtain full membership of the United Nations after being unable to participate for 22 years.

Permit me to congratulate Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on his ongoing reform efforts aimed at streamlining the operations of the United Nations. The state of the Organization's finances is an issue which should be of concern to all its Members. In that regard the Commonwealth of Dominica is making every effort to honour its financial commitments to the Organization.

As the international community takes on greater responsibilities in its efforts to establish a more stable world order, restructuring the Organization with improved cost effectiveness is becoming ever more critical. The

Organization must do its utmost to avoid wasting limited resources. However, the effect of cost-cutting on the interests of small developing countries needs to be examined closely. While the United Nations becomes more active in peace-keeping in various parts of the world, programmes aimed at assisting developing countries must not be allowed to suffer. We firmly believe that the right to development is an inalienable right, a right of every human person and of all peoples.

Dominica's economy is entirely dependent, at the present time, on the banana industry and on favoured access to our traditional markets in Europe. Our industry, vital to the survival of the Dominican people, is being threatened by the major banana producers of Latin America, although the Windward Islands industry accounts for only 2 per cent of the world's production of bananas. A threat to the banana industry in Dominica is also a threat to the fundamental human rights of its people as the collapse of this industry could lead to economic collapse, social upheaval and political disaster. The same prospect looms over the other Windward Islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada, with consequential effects on the other States of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Indeed, just last week we heard of serious unrest in St. Lucia as a direct consequence of adverse trends in banana prices. This is an augury of what could happen in any or all of the Windward Islands.

We call on the international community to support Dominica in its efforts to ensure the survival of its economy and the protection of its peoples' political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. More particularly, I call on our Latin American neighbours to honour the spirit of the Declaration of Managua and to take into account the severely adverse impact on the economies of OECS States that their policies on bananas, not critical to their own economies, are likely to have on ours.

Democracy and human rights have been a priority of the world community since the inception of the United Nations. Over the years there has been much debate on the universality of human rights and its indivisibility from, and link to, development. The decision of the General Assembly, by its resolution 45/155, to convene the Vienna Conference to deal with crucial issues surrounding the promotion and protection of human rights was timely and significant. Dominica applauds the efforts of those who worked towards the success of this important and historic Conference. I am particularly proud of Dominica's participation in the preparatory process as well as in the World Conference, which is an indication of our full commitment to the universalization of respect for human rights and the preservation of democracy.

Representatives at the World Conference gave a clear signal that it is necessary to increase financial and other resources to the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and the regional Commissions in order to reinforce their ability to provide greater technical cooperation between the United Nations and regional and national human rights institutions. As the focal point for human rights activities of the United Nations and the primary organizational institution within the Secretariat for the implementation of the human rights programme, the Centre for Human Rights must be provided with adequate means for carrying out its mandate.

On the international scene, the breakthroughs made in the Middle East and South Africa must be celebrated. Recent decisions taken by the leaders of those countries are encouraging and augur well for the future. The Madrid peace process launched in 1991 has not been in vain. Dominica noted with great satisfaction and pleasure the signing of the peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization - an agreement which will serve to secure a firm foundation for the mutual recognition of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. We sincerely hope that this agreement will eventually bring an end to the persistent violence and conflict that have plagued the Middle East for over four decades.

One year ago in this body, Dominica called for constructive and open dialogue between the African National Congress and the Pretoria regime in an effort to arrive at an early agreement on majority rule in South Africa. President De Klerk and Nelson Mandela's recent actions are a clear indication of their interest in peaceful progress towards a truly just and democratic society in the affairs of that country.

The finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq is a step towards the enhancement of stability and security in that region. We welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 833 (1993), in which the inviolability of this boundary is guaranteed, and we call upon Iraq to respect the terms of the resolution.

It is indeed disheartening that while progress is being made in the protection of human rights in certain parts of the world, the rights of the people of our Caribbean sister island, Haiti, continue to be violated even after moves by members of the international community to suspend sanctions against Haiti. Dominica, acting on Security

Council resolution 861 (1993), ordered the immediate suspension of all sanctions against Haiti, following the confirmation of Robert Malval as Prime Minister.

The Governors Island Agreement of July 1993 offered a glimmer of hope for the restoration of democracy and constitutional order in that country and for the eventual return of President Aristide to power. These hopes were shattered by the actions of those who officially sanction violence, threatening the lives of constitutionally appointed officials. The members of the de facto regime must understand that the international community will not stand idly by if the terms of the Governors Island Agreement are not respected. If the parties in Haiti fail to comply in good faith with this Agreement, Dominica will be ready to reactivate sanctions in keeping with the United Nations resolution to that effect. We will also do whatever we can within our limited resources to contribute to the restoration of democracy in Haiti. In that regard, Dominica is willing to contribute to the civilian police and training contingent to Haiti to assist in the return of President Aristide to the full exercise of his constitutional office and the stabilization of Haiti. In the meantime, we support President Aristide's call for the immediate replacement of the Chief of Police, a precondition to the security of the officials of the legitimate regime in that country.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Somalia continues to be cause for concern to all those who support the promotion and protection of human rights. We deplore the human tragedy resulting from ethnic differences and more specifically the barbaric torture and killing of hundreds of innocent people. We also condemn recent events in Nigeria, which demonstrate a lack of respect for the wishes of the people and a violation of their rights to participate in the affairs of their country.

While we are focusing on the subject of human rights, it is fitting that we make reference to the International Year of the World's Indigenous People launched on 10 December 1992. The rights of indigenous people all over the world continue to be violated as they fight to preserve their culture and identity. This is of particular concern to us in Dominica as our country is one of the few countries with an indigenous Carib population, a courageous and hard-working people with a rich history and culture. I urge the international community to lend its support to programmes and activities designed to allow for the participation of our indigenous peoples and other minorities in every aspect of the life of our countries. We in the Caribbean should have a special interest in this matter when we recall that within 28 years of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in our part of the world, the entire indigenous population of the Bahamas had been wiped out by the European conquerors. The failure of the industrialized nations to contribute significantly to the special fund is a matter of deep regret, which can yet be reversed.

Dominica has played a vital role in the regional and international effort to include women fully in the development process and it hopes to participate in the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in 1995. We are particularly concerned about the needs and situations of our indigenous women and the necessity for special programmes to address these needs. I wish to express satisfaction at the establishment of a regional office of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in the Caribbean and look forward to its support and cooperation in all aspects of women's affairs.

General Assembly resolutions 46/91, 46/94 and 45/106 called for a set of global targets on ageing for the year 2001 to provide a pragmatic focus for the broad goals of the International Plan of Action and to accelerate implementation of the Plan. In accordance with the aforementioned resolutions, a National Committee on Ageing was established in Dominica. The Committee is responsible for developing a national plan of action and making inputs into a regional plan of action on ageing. We call on the international community to support programmes tailored to the needs of senior citizens in keeping with national policies.

The sustainability of life on our planet is dependent on the importance we place on conservation of the environment. Dominica reaffirms its political commitment made at the Earth Summit held last year to pursue sustainable development.

We have recently acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendment, conventions which play a key role in the protection of our environment. Sustaining the environment is compatible with economic growth and development and is essential to sustainable development. However, it demands considerable additional resources which developing countries such as Dominica do not possess. We realize that we have an obligation to contribute to global solutions but additional finances are needed to assist in the many actions we will have to undertake to conserve the environment and follow sustainable developmental practices. We call on the international community to strengthen and give fuller

support to institutions such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which are concerned with assisting developing countries to achieve sustainable development. We also call on the industrialized countries to offer greater assistance to developing countries in the latter's efforts to make the transition to environmentally friendly technologies and economic activity. The industrialized countries of the world, which have disproportionately contributed to the environmental devastation that has occurred over the past 200 years, must take seriously their responsibility to contribute to the Global Environment Facility. The ability of developing countries to contribute to environmental sustainability depends on this.

Dominica welcomes the decision of the United Nations to organize the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in Barbados in 1994. We intend to participate fully in this laudable effort.

The United Nations now offers hope for a future of peace, security and development. Let us not allow our legitimate emphasis on peacemaking and peace-keeping to divert our attention from the equally legitimate demands of the developing world for development and security.

The delegation of Dominica salutes you, Mr. President, and wishes you a very successful presidency of this session of the General Assembly.

Mr. MALLET (Saint Lucia): May I at the outset extend to you, Sir, my own and my country's warmest congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Your assumption of the presidency is a singular honour for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). It marks the first occasion on which a person from that region has been elected to preside over the General Assembly. Your presence here in the Chair therefore provides added significance to the honour and privilege attached to the opportunity presented to my country, also a CARICOM State, to address this body. Knowing you as I do, Sir, I am certain that your experience, wisdom and diplomatic skills will guide our deliberations to successful and historic conclusions.

The end of the cold war and the movement towards democratization within the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, accompanied by the new level of entente between the major Powers in the Security Council, have led to a new paramountcy of this Organization in the conduct of relations between nations. Many of the essential principles of the Charter, too long suppressed in the presence of super-Power rivalries, are now given the opportunity, within this more conducive environment, to assume the importance for which they were designed when first established as a product of the wisdom of the founding fathers of this Organization.

The tendency towards globalization in economic, if not in political, terms suggests an era within which consensus and mutuality of approach will be essential for furthering balanced and sustained global advancement. The ideal of universality within the framework of this Organization becomes even more important in this context. Now that the grim obstacles which oppose the concepts of equality and universality are being dismantled in South Africa, we are hopeful that that country will soon be able to take its place around this hearth of the family of nations.

It was also in furtherance of the spirit of universality and its all-embracing purpose that Saint Lucia joined 11 other Member States of the United Nations in proposing the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda aimed at obtaining General Assembly agreement for the establishment of an ad hoc committee to study the situation of the Republic of China in Taiwan. That study would have focused on the search for an equitable, rational and practical solution that would enable the Republic of China in Taiwan to become a full Member of the United Nations. Unfortunately, this new but overdue initiative suffered a temporary setback in the General Committee.

However, I find it difficult to envisage that a country of 21 million people, whose industriousness has contributed to making their country the fourteenth-largest trading nation in the world, can continue to be impeded from becoming a Member of this Organization, where they will be afforded the opportunity to discharge their international obligations more fully. In keeping with its belief in the concept of universality, Saint Lucia gives support to the Government and people of the Republic of China in Taiwan in their aspiration to become full Members of this world Organization.

For many years now, the problems associated with the Middle East have been considered intractable. That unforgettable handshake, beamed to us in Saint Lucia live by the wonders of satellite technology, was for us as much a symbol of relief as it was a signal of hope - relief that it perhaps marked the beginning of the end of the bloodshed, suffering and hostility which have so plagued that region, and hope that their end would bring us one step farther along the path towards global cooperation through which

the future of humanity may eventually be rescued from a world which has hitherto been seemingly drifting towards self-destruction. My country wishes to convey its congratulations to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yasser Arafat on this bold and courageous step in the cause of peace against odds which, until then, seemed insurmountable. It is Saint Lucia's wish that this event will ignite the spark which kindles a beacon of peace to light the region along its way to realization of its fullest potential.

The heroic efforts of President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela in South Africa must also be praised. They have remained unintimidated by violence and endemic opposition in single-mindedly spearheading the creation of the Transitional Executive Council, which at long last gives an official say to a majority too long disenfranchised by official oppressive dictate. This progress allows Saint Lucia fully to support the lifting of the remaining sanctions, as called for by Mr. Mandela. With the recent agreement on Walvis Bay and the expectation that free and fair elections will be held in April next year, perhaps we can soon bring to a close this sad chapter of our history.

However, Saint Lucia is less sanguine over the situation in some other countries of Africa. The world recession has had an adverse effect on export revenues and therefore on their foreign-exchange earnings and debt-settlement ability. In addition, political strife has tended to exacerbate these difficulties. The success of globalization in its promotion of world economic growth depends on development which is shared. It is important that, in the understandable enthusiasm to do everything possible to assist with the transformation of previously centrally managed economies, Africa not be allowed to become a casualty of the ended cold war.

Saint Lucia welcomes the finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, which was accomplished by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission on 20 May this year. We also welcome the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 833 (1993), by which it guaranteed the inviolability of the boundary between the two States. This guarantee will serve as a deterrent against future conflict between Kuwait and Iraq. It will also enhance stability and security in the region. We call upon Iraq to respect the terms of Security Council resolution 833 (1993) and other relevant Security Council resolutions.

The firm resolve which this Organization, particularly the Security Council, has shown in dealing with the problems of the long-suffering people of Haiti is to be commended. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 45/2 of 10 October 1990, the United Nations has continued to reflect the international community's concern and will in its several action-oriented decisions culminating in the adoption of Security Council resolution 867 (1993) on 23 September of this year to deploy both military and paramilitary forces in Haiti. With a return to democracy and the application of the economic recovery programme envisaged by the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, it is hoped that Haiti will at last begin to experience the economic development which has for so long eluded it and which is an absolute imperative for alleviating the long suffering of its people.

Saint Lucia is happy to have been able to contribute actively to the process of democratization in Haiti. A team of more than 30 Saint Lucians helped with the organization of the electoral process and assisted in monitoring the elections. Some 15 Saint Lucians are today serving as monitors of human-rights abuses in that country. Saint Lucia is therefore deeply anxious that the restructuring and recovery process in Haiti should succeed, and we urge the international community to maintain solidarity with President Jean-Bertrand Aristide as he returns home to resume the mantle of leadership of his country.

Saint Lucia is a small Caribbean developing island State. If developing countries in general are in jeopardy, then small Caribbean developing island countries are exposed to double jeopardy. We are all trapped in an international economic system which yields no quarter to the problems and needs that are peculiar to us, and additionally insists upon using a continental measuring rod as a gauge of our development processes. Like castaways set adrift on the world's oceans, we have for some time been desperately trying to catch the ears of those who happily stand on solid ground. But our voices have somehow failed to carry in the face of the biting winds of global change which have, almost overnight, altered the very environment within which we have been conditioned by history to survive.

It is true that the small Caribbean island developing countries have in some cases registered important development gains over the past 10 to 15 years, a period which marks the attainment of sovereignty for these small developing countries. But the gains, where they do exist, have been achieved only by Herculean effort and should not be interpreted as evidence that particular or even special consideration in the granting of economic and technical assistance is not now still needed to promote sustained development. These gains are to be seen, rather,

in the context of the maxim: "One should help those who try to help themselves". The graduation of the small Caribbean island developing countries from the World Bank's "soft window" into net contributor status within the United Nations Development Programme - a graduation determined solely on the basis of an index of per capita income - is in our case tantamount to helping a drowning man onto a raft and then setting him adrift without a paddle.

Apart from having average per capita incomes that are only two-thirds that of developing countries in general, the small Caribbean island developing countries are burdened, as a factor of scale of operations, by administrative costs which are proportionately three times as high as that of continental developing countries. With our natural resources limited in quantity as well as diversity, the odds between success and failure become marginal and purely a matter of the quality of administration. Where no resource surpluses exist, little room is left for mistakes. Yet, because of our small national budgets and disproportionately high administrative costs, we often find ourselves unable to afford the diversity and quality of expertise required to broaden the odds.

In the case of my country, Saint Lucia, this already precarious economic situation is now compounded by a direct attack on the sole item of domestic exports which virtually keeps us from sinking into the depths of economic despair. As a primary agricultural state, Saint Lucia is the largest producer of bananas in the eastern Caribbean. As used here, however, "largest" is an extremely relative term. World annual banana production is currently about 10 million tons, of which the small States of the Windward Islands, comprising Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and Saint Lucia, produce less than 300,000, Saint Lucia producing about half of that quantity. Over 50 per cent of the working populations of these islands work in banana-associated enterprises. Both in Dominica and Saint Lucia, more than 50 per cent of export earnings is derived from banana exports. Our agricultural production is completely in the hands of many small private farmers. There is no Government banana-production ownership and there are no latifundia. Because of topographical constraints that adversely affect production costs, our banana industry has been assisted to survive primarily through the umbrella of modest preferential arrangements made available under the various Lomé Conventions.

Today, there are forces at work, urged on by multinational business interests, which would seek to wrest from us even the minuscule share - just 2 per cent of the market - which has enabled our economies barely to weather an increasingly hostile economic environment. In order to attempt to secure that end, they have also mounted initiatives in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in the European Court and within various international forums. Apart from the serious social consequences which cannot but follow a demise of the banana industry in these islands, it is also to be recognized that, in order to purchase goods and services from those very sources which advocate measures calculated to bring about that demise, we must first earn the foreign exchange to be able to do this. It can only be hoped that, in the end, sympathetic understanding will prevail over intransigence in the determination of this vital issue.

In this post-cold-war era, ideological considerations have given way to political initiatives in the determination of the direction of official-aid flows. The weight given to foreign policy in deciding on foreign-aid flows means that assistance is not always necessarily directed towards areas of greater need, but is directed, rather, to areas with issues which are politically topical. With a modest per capita income which threatens the little remaining access it has to concessionary assistance, with official financial flows directed elsewhere, and with the main export commodity under attack, Saint Lucia is left to wonder whether there is in existence a concerted intention to marginalize small island countries or whether it is merely the accident of present world conditions that bears this responsibility. In any event, the effect remains the same.

Political gain cannot be sustained in the absence of complementary economic progress. Where world economic advancement is isolated in its impact, political gain in world terms will continue to prove transitory and incapable of being sustained. It is true that the world has seen an impressive political transformation in a rather brief period of time in terms of a transition to democracy and a new degree of cooperation in the United Nations at the level of the Security Council. But if the price of these political gains is an exacerbated marginalization of the small developing countries, they will undoubtedly soon be dissipated in a sea of economic troubles and the social disruption which experience suggests must follow as a consequence.

The urgency of the international debt crisis may have been defused, but developing-country debt, after reaching a brief plateau, is again on the rise, approaching $1.5 trillion. This situation is made more difficult by the drag on world economic output, which is being caused partly by the dislocation of economies of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. An expansion of world trade, coupled with the recovery of commodity prices, lies at the

region and are looking to participate in economic-cooperation initiatives within the Americas and elsewhere.

Population growth in the developing countries, too, though it has maintained a relatively steady rate for over a decade, continues to increase in numerical terms, accounting for 93 per cent global population growth, which is now about 93 million annually. The balance between economic and population growth must be stabilized in the interest of human progress.

We approach the twenty-first century with world changes which have been as rapid as they have been bewildering. The ensuing challenge which lies before small countries such as ours, daunting as it is because of our slender resources, is to develop the necessary resilience to enable us to adapt to these changes. I am of the view that incorporated within the idea of universality is the concept of common progress and the need to ensure that an environment is created within which world-embracing advancement becomes possible.

In this context, the United Nations cannot be expected to micro-manage global change; as the pre-eminent global Organization, its resources must be enhanced to allow it to play an even greater role as a fulcrum, both in the traditional spheres of activity and in new areas created by the new order of things. The United Nations is, accordingly, seen as playing an expanded role in the economic welfare of developing countries, including the development and application of further initiatives to address constraints imposed by smallness and island status.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's agenda for development, with the expectation that it will seek to address the new problems and challenges which have arisen even as some of the old issues have been, or are in the process of being, put to bed.

Let me assure the Assembly of Saint Lucia's pledge to continue to cooperate fully within the institutions of the Organization to further its objectives for the betterment of humanity. What we lack in financial resources we can perhaps make up in human resources. The fact that Saint Lucia has produced two Nobel laureates in this generation is indicative, I believe, of our ability to cooperate in the common pursuit of the noble purposes of this esteemed Organization.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.